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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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17 January 1968

East German-Soviet Talks

The official East German news agency ADN on 16 January reported the "unofficial" visit to East Berlin on 15-16 January of Soviet leaders Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny. According to the bland ADN statement, the Soviets met with Ulbricht, Honecker, Stoph, and other members of the Politburo in a "cordial and friendly atmosphere." The two sides exchanged views on "questions of the international Communist and workers movement, questions of the further development of the political and economic cooperation and the fraternal relations between the USSR and the GDR..., and some problems of the present international situation." In a strangely worded formulation, ADN stated that in "all questions discussed the complete agreement of the two sides was placed on record." [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: The Czech situation, West Berlin and West Germany, and the forthcoming Budapest meeting were undoubtedly discussed. The ADN wording on "complete agreement" being "placed on record" suggests the two sides did not agree completely on everything. [REDACTED]

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Slovak Calls for Complete Democratization of Czechoslovakia

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Gustav Husak, a former chairman of the Slovak government who was purged as a "bourgeois nationalist," has called for a complete democratization in Czechoslovakia. He has demanded free elections, free expressions of opinion, and democratic control of the government.

Husak's demands were in a startling editorial in the 12 January issue of Kulturny Zivot, the weekly journal of the Slovak Writers' Union and today the vanguard of intellectual dissent in Czechoslovakia. Husak portrayed Czechoslovakia as an advanced European country, and emphasized that the rights in the constitution should be observed by daily implementation, especially of that article which says "all power emanates from the people." Husak congratulated Dubcek on his election as Czechoslovak party first secretary, and laid it on the line: the future--democratization, in Husak's implied terminology--depends on "the courage or the fickleness of those persons who hold responsible positions."

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COMMENT: The publication of this article is indicative of the excitement and hope generated by the toppling of Novotny. Husak, once the number two man in Slovakia, was arrested in 1950 and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1954. He was quietly released later, and officially rehabilitated in 1968. Together with others gathered around Kulturny Zivot, he was a driving force for de-Stalinization in the early 1960's. He has never regained any official post, however.

Yugoslavs Reportedly Seek Military Cooperation with Italy

Yugoslav premier Spiljak sought military cooperation with Italy during his 8-10 January visit to Rome, according to the Belgrade tabloid Vecernji Novosti. Spiljak reportedly secured Italian acceptance in principle of cooperation between the two

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armies and agreement to the visit of an Italian warship to Yugoslavia. So far, the major dailies, Borba and Politika, have failed to mention the subject. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: The Yugoslavs have been pressing for sometime for exchange visits of military delegations and naval units, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] so far the Italian military had been unresponsive to these overtures. These efforts are part of Belgrade's attempts to create some kind of Mediterranean solidarity in order to forestall any future confrontation between the US and the USSR in the Eastern Mediterranean, an ambitious if unrealistic policy. [REDACTED]

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Hungarian CC Journal Reviews Progress and Aims of Preparatory Meeting

The January issue of the central committee journal Partelet reports that "some seventy fraternal parties" have voiced their support for convening the Budapest Preparatory Meeting. The journal cited intensification of the anti-imperialist struggle and harmonization of views on "new phenomena" in the international situation and in the movement itself as goals of a party conference. The article also insisted that Chinese internal policies were not to be discussed at a conference, but that Chinese foreign policy would be discussed as an element of the anti-imperialist struggle. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: According to Zoltan Komocsin's 24 December article in Nepszabadsag, only thirty parties had announced agreement at that time. It is possible that another forty parties have climbed on the band wagon since then, but there has not been a subsequent increase in public announcements of agreement.

Warsaw Students Call For Opposition Party

A group of students at Warsaw University called for the establishment of an "opposition party" in Poland during a meeting of the University's chapter of the Union of Socialist Youth (ZMS) last month. [REDACTED] "some students" took issue with theses presented by Marian Dobrosielski, former counsellor of the Polish Embassy in Washington (1959-65) and now a lecturer at WU. It was pointed out to the students that

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an opposition party would only invite a "struggle for power,"
and would not permit the taking of those "optimal decisions"
required in Poland during the building of socialism.

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COMMENT:

If true

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this particular meeting suggests that student unrest at the
university has not abated and that lack of political freedom
is still a burning issue.

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NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT
ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE DIVISION

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